

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 9-10, 2006

ITEM NUMBER: 15

SUBJECT: Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements Resolution No. R3-2006-0013, for On-Site Domestic Mound Wastewater Disposal System, Z Best Composting, 980 Highway 25, Gilroy (APN 841-37-022), Santa Clara County, Resolution No. R3-2006-0013

KEY INFORMATION

Disposal Type:	Individual on-site domestic septic system with mound disposal system
Design Flow:	600 gallons per day
Property:	159-acre agricultural/residential
Landowner/Discharger:	Greg Ryan
Local Oversight Agency:	Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health
This Action:	Adopt Resolution No. R3-2006-0013 waiving waste discharge requirements

DISCUSSION

On November 7, 2005, Central Coast Regional Water Board (Water Board) staff received a request for a subsurface disposal system Basin Plan exemption from the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health (SCCDEH). The request included a *Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD): Supplemental Form for Regional Board Subsurface Disposal Exemption Submittal* (Supplemental Form). The ROWD, prepared by Michael Batz REHS, for Greg Ryan (the Discharger), includes a design for an on-site domestic mound wastewater disposal system. The SCCDEH determined that the site is unsuitable for a standard on-site subsurface disposal system because it provides insufficient vertical separation between the disposal trench bottom and first-encountered groundwater. Consequently, the site violates the Basin Plan prohibition mentioned above and SCCDEH is not authorized to issue a permit unless the Executive Officer approves a Basin Plan exemption. The Santa Clara County Engineering Department conditionally approved the mound system design on October 26, 2005. Based on information provided in the ROWD, the Executive Officer approved the Basin Plan exemption and notified the Discharger of this

proposed waiver of waste discharge requirements on December 11, 2005.

Resolution No. 89-04, *Waiver of Regulation of Specific Types of Waste Discharges*, formerly waived waste discharge requirements for on-site wastewater disposal systems. That Resolution expired on June 30, 2004. State Board staff is developing State regulations for on-site systems. When the State regulations are enacted, Water Board staff will present a general waiver of waste discharge requirements to the Water Board for its consideration. In the meantime, staff proposes the Water Board adopt waivers of waste discharge requirements for each subsurface disposal system that is not compliant with the Basin Plan, and which the local agency may not regulate because the system requires a Basin Plan exemption.

Disposal System Design. The proposed mound system is designed to provide adequate treatment to septic tank effluent when the groundwater rises too near the ground surface; in this case, within five feet. The system is designed to treat a peak daily flow of 600 gallons per day (gpd) with a 2,555 square foot (sf) of mound basal area.

The proposed septic and mound disposal system design complies with the requirements of the State Board's 1980 *Guidelines for Mound Systems* and 1998 *Draft Mound System Guidelines*. The loading rate of 0.25 gpd/sf is within the range proposed in the guidelines. The SCCDEH approved the initial mound system design and forwarded the Supplemental Form to the Water Board for final review and approval on November 7, 2005. In addition, the Santa Clara County Environmental Health and Engineering Departments certified the Supplemental Form and recommended conceptual approval of the exemption request.

With adequate oversight, dischargers have successfully installed and used mound disposal systems under similar constraints. The SCCDEH shall regulate the mound system with a conditional permit. The conditions require the Discharger to implement the following measures:

- Only a licensed contractor shall install the mound system;
- The site shall be graded to direct rainfall or runoff away from the mound system;
- Septic tank effluent shall be screened to remove larger solids;
- To ensure replacement or repair of faulty system components, the Discharger shall enter into a service contract with an entity knowledgeable in the operation and maintenance of mound systems;
- Grasses shall be planted on the mound and shrubs shall be planted around the mound perimeter;
- The Discharger shall record the treatment and disposal system locations and the requirement for a maintenance agreement on the deed to the property;
- The disposal area shall be inspected monthly for the first two years of operation;
- An inspection log shall be maintained and kept onsite;
- Before placing any mound construction materials, the Discharger shall obtain written approval from the SCCDEH;
- The installation contractor shall ensure that the soils are properly moist before disturbing the site, the system components are correctly installed, the wastewater is correctly distributed through the disposal system, and the design professional observes the system installation;
- Within 30 days after the installation is complete, the Discharger shall provide final 'as-built' drawings to the SCCDEH and the Water Board;
- The septic tank, wet well, and alarm system shall be inspected every six months for the life of the system; and
- The Discharger shall submit an annual monitoring report to the SCCDEH and the Water Board.

Conditional Waiver The waiver of waste discharge requirements and discharge of domestic sewage to the proposed on-site mound domestic disposal system is subject to various conditions and monitoring and reporting requirements. The conditions and requirements are specified in the attached waiver resolution.

The proposed on-site mound domestic disposal system, if operated and maintained in accordance with the SCCDEH permit requirements and the waiver conditions, will be protective of water quality. This waiver is conditional and can be terminated at any time. This waiver expires on February 10, 2011.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
Individual subsurface disposal systems for domestic residences are categorically exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guideline 15303.

CONCLUSION

The Discharger designed the mound system according to current State of California design standards. The SCCDEH shall regulate the proposed treatment and disposal system with a permit including monitoring, reporting, and additional design conditions. Therefore, staff concludes the system should operate well for its design lifetime and will not likely impair the beneficial uses of groundwater underlying the disposal site or nearby surface waters.

COMMENTS

Santa Clara County Health – No response

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution No. R3-2006-0013

ATTACHMENT

Proposed Resolution No. R3-2006-0013